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NOAH AND THE FLOOD.

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In a former number we have given our impressions of the Adam of the Bible. The next Biblical character of mark is Noah, whose life forms an era in history, and we shall make this article turn upon him. According to Jewish testimony as Adam was the first so Noah was the second great ancestor from whom the present inhabitants of the earth are descended, all his contemporaries, except his own family, having been destroyed by the flood. This testimony concerning him so generally credited invests his name with an historic interest inferior only to that of him to whom, as the first man, he traced his own origin. With that historic interest the singular events of his life, — his strange and unexampled fortunes, — have blended much of the charm of poetry and romance. So extraordinary are the circumstances connected with his life that we can hardly believe in their reality. In reading them we almost fancy that we are perusing a fantastic legend of the Mythic ages. And yet their reality is rendered probable by such evidence that we find it far less difficult to admit it generally than to deny it altogether.

The materials from which our account of him is composed are very few, being all contained in a chapter or two of the Bible; but yet a single event in which he bore a conspicuous part has long been thought to have covered the whole earth.

with its memorials. The records of that event are found,—so at least it is extensively believed,—not alone in the Bible and written histories, but in that “older scripture” also of which “star-eyed Science” is the priest and interpreter.

Noah was born in that part of Asia which is now called Persia in the year of the world ten hundred and fifty-six. His father's name was Lamech, and he was the instructor of his son in the history of all the past ; for he had been, during a period of fifty-six years, the contemporary of him in whom that history began, and enjoyed ample opportunity for gathering up the traditions of man from the beginning. All these traditions then,—all he knew of God, of the creation, of the first transgression, of the various fortunes of the immediate family of Adam,—and all *we* know too — Noah received only at second-hand from the primal head, his own father having been the intervening authority. So that,—to use the statement of another,—“he had as perfect an account of whatever had happened since the creation as any man can have of what happened in the days of his own father and grand-father ; or as any man can have of what happened sixty years ago.” While, then, Noah was born a thousand years or more after Adam, and when the population of the land had become immense, he was instructed in childhood from the lips of one who had spent half a century in the neighborhood, perhaps in the very family, of the man who could remember the time when, besides himself, there was not, to his knowledge, another human being on the face of the earth. Thus by a single historical link is the ark connected with the garden of Eden,—the Deluge with the creation. We have said that Noah was born in the Western part of Asia. It seems to be agreed amongst those who have most thoroughly investigated the subject that the country thus designated was the cradle of the human race,—science and history confirming in this particular the testimony of Revelation. “If,” says Monsieur Guyot, “taking tradition for our guide we follow step by step the march of the primitive nations as we ascend to their point of departure it is to the very centre of this plateau, (in Western Asia,) that they irresistibly lead us.” This opinion is only a corroboration of that confidently avowed, and as far as possible demonstrated, by that most patient and learned investigator, Sir William Jones. In fact, we are not

aware that it has been seriously called in question by any respectable authority, although hints of dissent may be traced in the views lately promulgated of one of our most distinguished and philosophical explorers in natural science. Here, then, in this region of salubrious climate, warmed by the winds of the tropics and fanned by the mountain breezes, of fertile soil and dense population, in the lap of abundance and luxury, Noah passed his early days. But while all the aspects of nature by which he was surrounded were calculated to make him happy in his lot and to fill him with gratitude to Heaven in the contemplation of it, it was far otherwise with his moral environment. The work of degeneracy had long been going on in the race of men. They had become exceedingly sinful. Ten or fifteen centuries of self-indulgence had well nigh consumed the divine image and little remained in man but animal appetites and brutal passions. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence."

But Noah was an exception. He fell not into the prevailing manners. He resisted all the temptations to depart from the wisdom of the just who had gone before him. When others became vain and self-confident, he remained humble. When others revelled in pleasure and the wildness of mirth, he lived sober and severe. When others grew fierce and cruel towards one another and robbery and murder were their vocation, and the battle-shout and the screams of helpless victims their favorite music and pastime, he continued kind in his temper, simple in his pursuits, a lover of peace and order. When others had cast off all fear of God and restrained prayer before him, he listened to His counsels with docility and reverence, and worshipped him in the sincerity of an honest heart and the beauty of holiness; and so "found grace in his eyes." Nay, not content with merely giving an example in his life and conversation of that integrity and piety which he knew to be pleasing in the sight of God, he strove earnestly to awaken the same sentiments in the bosoms of his fellowmen; and to this end he took on him the office of "preacher of righteousness," and in that character drew upon himself the sneers and the enmity

of the ignorant and impious rout around him. But that which rendered him obnoxious to them made him the more an object of Divine love, and secured to him, at last, a distinction in the allotments of Heaven which no other mortal has enjoyed. Beautifully is it said of him, "He was a just man and walked with God."

It may be asked how the almost universal corruption of men in this age is to be accounted for? Scripture has an explanation in the fact that "the sons of God" had married with "the daughters of men." And this may be regarded as a sufficient explanation. We know not precisely who these "daughters of men" were. All we can say positively concerning them is that they belonged to some other branch of the human family than that which is traced from Seth the son of Adam to Noah. Whether they were from a collateral branch of the Eden family, or whether they sprang from another stock created at the same time with our Adam and Eve, we have no means of deciding, and are left only to uncertain conjecture. But that they were strangers to virtue, vain, fond of pleasure and luxury, destitute of all sense of moral obligation, forgetters of God, and withal, fair and fascinating, is quite too evident for their credit. And to their evil influence on the young men whose fathers had been taught of God and walked in honor before him, — alluring them into follies from which they could find no way of return, and persuading them to vices which in their weakness they could not shake off, the Scriptures, (no doubt justly,) attribute the dark and malignant depravity of the times at which we are glancing. It is said also that "there were giants in those days;" but whether giants in stature or in crime, or, (which seems more probable,) in their exploits of strength and valor coupled with crime, does not distinctly appear.

And now when the wickedness of men had become incurable and hopeless, when it had spread its poison through all classes of society and into all families, corrupting the most intimate and sacred relations of life, in the peculiar language of the old Hebrew narrators, "it repented the Lord that he had made man on earth, and it grieved him at his heart." This declaration has been to many a stumbling-block. The Lord repenting! The Lord grieved! He who alone is unchangeable affected with weak-



nesses like men ! But notwithstanding the seeming paradox in them, what words could more forcibly express the tenderness of the Lord's heart, so to speak, his loving interest in the work of his hands ? That which he had once looked upon and saw that it was very good, alas ! how has it changed to evil ; how has the gold become dim ! No longer does it bear the traces of its heavenly origin ; no longer does the Divine fire burn in it ; and the incense of its sacrifices has ceased to rise. And no longer is there room for change or ground for hope. "They are all gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good." Now, if a sense of disappointment and the anguish of grief could be supposed ever to enter the bosom of God, here surely would seem to be the occasion for it. And it is evident that his proceedings in the premises are described, by those who observed them reverently, in a manner adapted to the existence of such emotions in him. It should not be forgotten that they, looking back from a point in the future far onward, relate things as they appeared — not always as they were actually but as they *appeared* to observers. They saw, for example, that certain things were brought to pass by the Providence of God, and traced them immediately to those human sentiments supposed to exist in the Divine being to which they most nearly corresponded. If they were of destructive nature, they would be referred to his displeasure and wrath — if beneficent, to his kindness and love, — if afflicting, but at the same time salutary, to his justice mingled with compassion. A religious person looking back on the moral state of the world, knowing also the extraordinary catastrophe of the time, would very naturally, without the help of revelation, conceive of God as lamenting the iniquity of men and grieving at the necessity of exterminating a race that had been so dear to him. Speaking religiously, and not philosophically, he could not cast his conceptions into a better form of words. Referring all, in the first place, to the Divine Being, the next step would be that involuntary and instantaneous analysis which designates the particular sentiments in the Divine nature that best corresponded with the transactions. It has been said that "in a rude state of society all great calamities are regarded by the people as judgments of God on the wickedness of man." This view is not confined, we think, to a rude state. It belongs also to

the most cultivated when that is a highly religious state. We may be slow to adopt it at the time of the events, but afterwards on reviewing them, the habit is universal, with those, in whom the sentiments of religion are deeply rooted, to refer them directly to the Divine Hand ; content when the reasons cannot be discriminated and defined to admit that the ways of God are inscrutable ; yet, confident in the conviction that they are all designed to make the world better and man happier. So, then, the language of the Bible which represents God as acting from disappointment or grief, or a sense of offended justice, which has been so much a subject of infidel cavil, is not very different from that which religious persons now use in describing analogous events, every day. It is *their view* of the case ; in the instance before us, the historian's view of it, not as he *knew* it to be, but as it *appeared* to him looking at it from the point of his religious faith and culture. " And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth." This is the language of his acts. It is the language which a sincere faith in him as the all-disposing Power, describing the fact afterwards, naturally imputes to him. Did any one ever hear him actually *say* those words ? And now let us take our stand in the midst of the surrounding moral darkness and view the Divine Power displaying itself in terrible destruction till of all the numerous inhabitants of the country, none are left alive but Noah and his own immediate family. Long time in advance this righteous man has had suspicions, fears, and, at last, direct intimations, of a widespread and awful desolation approaching. He feels, he is sure, that man will not be suffered much longer to taint the air with his breath and to curse the earth with his foulness and his crimes. He is convinced that some fearful retribution is at hand, some sweeping overthrow ; and the more he ponders on the subject, and especially, the more he opens his heart before God concerning it in his hours of devotion, the stronger the conviction becomes, till, at length, the revelation breaks upon his mind that the destruction he has so long dreaded shall come in the form of an overwhelming tempest, pouring down from the clouds, bursting in from the sea, breaking forth from the springs and fountains of the earth, burying beneath its waters not only the plains, the forests, the cultivated fields, the cities,

but also the tops of the mountains, and destroying every living creature. This becomes a settled and unchangeable conviction with him. He traces it directly to the inspiration of God. He knows no difference between it, in respect to its truth, and an audible announcement from Heaven. He feels that God has actually *spoken* to him. But is he himself to be carried away in the general ruin? Is there no way for him to avoid the appalling doom of his fellow men? He will ask and God shall tell him? Yes, it is done; the answer is received. "Make thee an ark, so and so — finish it within and without — and when it is, ready, go into it with your sons and your wife and your sons' wives — take also of animals and birds enough to preserve the different species, and provisions or food for the support of all." "And thus *did* Noah: according to all that God commanded him, so did he." In other words not so religious, — perhaps not so true, — he acted from these deep and irrepressible persuasions of his mind.

So did he. The Lord told him what to do, and he did it. He heard the Voice and obeyed it. He proceeded to build the ark. Of gopher-wood he constructed it, that is probably, of cypress, a tree which abounded at a later period in that country. He divided it into several apartments, and, following what he conceived to be the Divine direction, covered it within and without with pitch of bitumen, — a substance still found in that region, — which rendered the vessel impervious to water. And so he went on month after month, year after year, for half a century or more, preparing the materials of this huge vessel and putting them together; assured all the time that it was no useless labor, yet continually exposed to the derision of neighbors, friends, and kindred. He went on, — his faith never faltering, his patience never tiring, cheered and sustained in view of the desolation he so constantly expected, by the spirit of God which he daily sought and received; — he went on, in spite of the sorrowful pity of his friends, and the taunts and jeers of the malicious and God-defying, and the length and hardship of the work, till all was completed and prepared to receive on board its unique cargo and company.

What sort of a vessel was this? What were her dimensions? Her measure is given in cubits. A cubit is the length

in a full-grown person from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, — commonly reckoned a foot and a half. Noah's vessel was 350 cubits in length, 50 in width, and 30 in height ; or 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 high. It consisted of three stories or floors. Its measure was 1,418,750 cubical feet. Reckoning 42 feet to the ton, this would make her burthen 36,160 tons. It was, then, by far the largest vessel ever built. A writer in a number of the Naval Chronicles for the year 1799 makes the following observation concerning it : " This ark, ship, or whatever else it may be called, had neither oars, sails, masts, yard, rudder, nor any sort of rigging whatever ; being guided by Divine Providence and having no particular port or coast to arrive at, it was only formed to float upon the waters, and when these were dried up it rested on the mountains of Ararat. The structure of the ark was certainly adapted to the burthen it was to carry and the weather it was to endure, and in these respects it may be considered as the most complete and perfect model that ever was devised." He adds in a note, that about the beginning of the 17th century Peter Janson, a Dutch merchant, caused a ship to be built for him answering in its several proportions to those of Noah's ark. At first this ark was looked upon no better than as a fanatical vision of the owner, and whilst it was building he and his ship were the sport of the seamen. But afterwards, it was discovered that ships built in this manner were, in time of peace, beyond all other most commodious for commerce, because they would hold a third part more, without requiring any addition of hands. Not being learned in naval architecture it will not be expected of us to pass judgment on this opinion. We are quite content to feel assured that our ancestral navigator found the ship he had built sufficiently capacious and altogether adapted to its purpose ; and that his first and only voyage in her was completed without the slightest damage, or the loss of so much as a spar !

When this gigantic work was finished Noah perceived, by signs and tokens which could not be mistaken, that the day so long anticipated by him with steadfast faith was now nigh at hand. The heavens and the earth gave clear indications of a frightful convulsion of the elements. The instinct of beasts

and birds taught them the danger and caused them to seek the ark as a place of refuge.

"Of every beast and bird and insect small  
Came sevens and pairs, and entered in as taught  
Their order."

This done the family of Noah, resigning themselves to the care of God, took their place in the new and strange habitation :

"Last the sire and his three sons  
With their four wives ; and God made fast the door."

They are shut in, and that door shall no more be opened till the dreadful year of visitation is ended. They who mocked and derided shall come begging for admission — but too late ! The door is shut ! They would not repent at the preaching of Noah ; they would not believe his testimony ; and now, though they may see and lament their folly there is no longer a way for escape from the swift-rushing torrents of desolation. Seven days pass and the rain begins to fall. "The fountains of the great deep are broken up and the windows of heaven are opened." Forty days and nights the storm continues and the waters increase and bear up the ark, and it is lifted up above the earth. Still the waters increase and the ark moves upon the face of them. Presently the high hills are all covered. Then the tops of the mountains are buried out of sight ; and all around is a dismal waste. All is rapt in the silence of death. Every living creature, all the millions of men, women, and children who, a few weeks before, were careless of their fate as the infant in the cradle, all are buried in one dark grave of waters ! A hundred and fifty days are gone ; and now the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven are stopped, and the waters return from off the earth continually. Less than two months more, and the ark touches on the summit of Ararat. Soon the raven is sent out and the dove also. And then returns the bird bearing the olive-branch, — sweet emblem of peace to the anxious bosoms of the long-imprisoned family ! Noah looks out after a few days and descries the tops of the hills. A little time longer and the whole earth comes into view. The ark is opened. Its inmates go forth ; — but into what a solitude ! How changed the aspect of all things ! Where *are*

they now? In what new region do they find themselves disembarking? Far up among the Northern mountains where they had never been before — hundreds of miles from the familiar acres they used to till — alone — not another human being, (as they have reason to suppose), alive upon the face of all the earth — with nothing but their hands to supply their wants! Yet they have Jehovah for their Counsellor. They feel nearer than ever to him. And they quickly learn that it is his will through them to re-people the devastated earth. Their first act, as they go forth from the ark, is an act of religion. They think of the Being who had so graciously preserved them and the incense of their sacrifice ascends as a sweet-smelling savor into Heaven. “Noah was found perfect and righteous; in the time of wrath he was taken in exchange *for the world*; therefore was he left as a remnant unto the earth when the flood came. An everlasting covenant was made with him, that all flesh should perish no more by the flood.”

(To be continued.)

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## THE VOICE OF JESUS.

BY REV. A. B. MUZZEY.

THE voice of Jesus,—that great shepherd of the sheep,—how prolific is the theme! What a world of associations, holy and touching, circle around it! We love to think of that dignified form, and that majestic countenance, combining in itself the most winning gentleness and love, with a commanding power. But our conception of Christ is never perfect, until we imagine him in the act of speaking. It is his voice, in the tones that issue from his soul, which crowns his character, and establishes his divinity.

Had he appeared on earth only to labor in the closet, and commit his doctrines to writing, and sent forth the record as the corner-stone of his religion,—admirable as it is, all pure, instinct with spirituality and a god-like benevolence,—I do not believe that the foundations of Christianity could have been so laid. Strike the spoken words of Jesus out of that which

composed his character, and sinless as his actions were, they could not, I believe, have convinced the world that he came from God. Nor could his miracles performed in silence, no, not even his resurrection from the dead, have been sufficient to prove his divine commission. For it was what he said to his disciples after he was risen; it was his spoken language, what he addressed personally to the alarmed Mary, to the doubting Thomas, to the denying Peter, and to all the little band of his disconsolate disciples; it was the mission he gave them and its attendant promises, it was all these embodied, in audible tones, which gave them courage and energy for their work. In one word, it was the living voice that breathed forth to all nations and down through all ages the everlasting gospel.

This may seem to some persons an extravagant view. They may think there was enough done by Jesus independently of his preaching to establish his religion upon earth. But do such consider the power of vocal sounds?

What numerous and deep impressions do we daily receive from the voices of nature. I am not surprised that the pious Hebrew, as he listened to the many-tongued Sea, exclaimed, "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters." How natural that when the desolating tempest raged through the forests, he should say, "The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars, yea the cedars of Lebanon." As he looked on the dark heavens and saw the sudden flash, and heard peals which caused him to quake, "The voice of the Lord" was his exclamation, "divideth the flames of fire." Did the earth rock beneath his feet, it was "the voice of the Lord" that "shaketh the wilderness." Thus are our highest conceptions of power naturally associated with personified sounds.

Nor less are feelings of tenderness awakened by, or connected with, the vocal utterances of the irrational creatures. An eminent writer observes that all the multitude of nature's sounds are on the minor key," that is, they excite plaintive emotions. It is remarkable how even the notes of an animal sometimes affect the mind. The howl of the dog or the mournful strain of the turtle-dove heard at midnight affect even the most insensible. It is related by Audubon that a hardened pirate was once, when on shore in the depths of night, startled by



the touching voice of a Zeneida dove. And so did it melt his spirit and subdue his conscience that he instantly repented before God of his guilt, and went his way and sinned no more.

But if the notes of the irresponsible creatures so move our feelings, how much more must they yield to those of that powerful instrument, the human voice. God has given to this faculty, through the utterances of music, and in the effects of eloquence, power to reach that part of our nature over which religion exerts its chief sway. It is, as one has remarked, "the peculiar organ of the soul. The intellect sits enthroned visibly upon man's head and in his eye; and his heart is written upon his countenance. But the soul reveals itself in the voice only." God revealed himself to the prophets of old in 'the still, small voice,' and in a voice too from the burning bush; and repeatedly in the mission of Christ.

What parent has not felt the soul of his child flowing into his own, through this audible channel? The eye may beam gladness; the whole countenance may be radiant; but it only affects the soul when to the father it seems to speak. Why sports the mother with her infant son? It is to tempt forth that sweetest music to her ear, his voice; and if the cry of suffering be heard, with electric swiftness it strikes the parent's soul. In our jubilant moments we spontaneously sing for joy; and there is a sadness which finds its greatest pleasure in strains of mournful melody.

Who has not experienced the touching effect of the voice of one cast on the bed of sickness? We hasten to afford relief to the plaintive sufferer; we watch his slightest word amid declining strength; and when, after days of faintness and the long nights of sinking nature, the voice at length fails, we feel for the moment as if the last solace were taken from us. But can it be that this precious chord, along which so many sweet endearments have passed, will perish with the body? "It is hard for me," — I adopt the words of another, — "It is hard for me to believe that the voice must die. Will it not be the voice of those we love which shall guide us to their distant choir, and call us to some spot, apart even in Heaven, to tell us in secret of their new joys? I can give up the eye-beam, the lip-smile, and the touch; the form may moulder and depart to

dust; but surely the voice will only glide away, and wait somewhere in silence to welcome us again."

The voice, then, of Jesus must have been a most effective means of reaching the souls of his hearers. Its tones, we may believe, were not only expressive and powerful, but they were various. They conveyed every successive emotion of his sensitive spirit directly to the spirit of the listener.

He spoke usually, I imagine, in strains of tenderness and love. As he looked round him on the sin-burdened multitude, "Come unto me," he would say, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Daughter, weep not" — "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee." When he drew near to Jerusalem on his last visit, what pathos there must have been in those tones in which he uttered his lamentations over that fated city of his affections. What but the deepest tenderness can we imagine in the accompanying tone with which he gave his last kind word of consolation to his loved disciples. "Let not your heart be troubled," is its soothing introduction. "Be of good cheer," is its striking conclusion, "I have overcome the world."

But though thus gentle and subdued in its accustomed utterances, there were times when the voice of Jesus must have been fearful in arousing the hearer. Think, in this aspect, of his warnings. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." "If ye forgive not one another, his trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." "Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness."

Think still more of the rebukes of Jesus. In what tones must he have spoken to the wicked. Take that single chapter of his terrible denunciations, beginning, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" Read the doom pronounced on those who do all their works to be seen of men. "Ye blind guides, ye fools, ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The very perusal of the language sends a chill through the soul. What then must it have been to listen to his actual voice as it poured forth the scorching lava of woe upon woe. Verily the stoutest hearts must have quailed before the living, speaking Jesus.

To illustrate the topic before us we may analyze the figure under which Christ represents himself as the good Shepherd. This occupation illustrates most happily the relation of Jesus to his followers. It was the custom in the East for the Shepherd, instead of driving his flock, as is done with us, to go before them, and induce them by the tones of his voice to follow him wherever he went. Hence Christ speaks of leading his sheep. "My sheep," said he, "hear my voice, and they follow me."

Let us look at some of the characteristics of Christ as our Shepherd and guide.

We are told that the flock "hear his voice and he calleth them all by name." There is no individual who does not know and always recognize the Shepherd, for he addresses them all. Among the multitudes of religionists, in this world, it is our happy privilege to belong to that which is called by the name of Christ. How jealous are we for the right to this name. We resent the appellation of infidels. Christ calleth to every one of us. But do we hear his voice? Do we rise and go at his bidding? In a word, do we follow Christ? If we do not, then why do we claim so earnestly the privileges and look forward so confidently to the prospects of his flock?

The good shepherd conducts his sheep into verdant fields. He maketh them to lie down in green pastures. They who truly follow Christ enjoy the means of spiritual life. They have forsaken the barren plains of iniquity. They do not seek their subsistence on the brown and burnt lands of the world, where the soul must famish with hunger. He who is near Christ is filled with perennial food. Religion is to him an ever fresh topic; it imparts vigor and health and immortal life to his spirit.

The true Shepherd leadeth us beside the still waters. And so calm, so deep, so clear are they, that all may gather round them and allay their thirst. Nay, whosoever will drink of the water which Christ giveth him shall not need to look abroad for this element. The water he hath shall be in him a fountain springing up in everlasting fulness. And how can we refuse to hear his voice and follow him as he points to the well of life? Why should we forsake him and hew out to ourselves broken cisterns? Why consent to leave these pure waters and

drink of the turbid, soul-polluting draughts of guilt? It is truly amazing that so many should choose, instead of seeking the still waters of Jesus, to rush round the deafening torrents of wickedness, and put to their lips a cup which sends fever and death through the soul!

Christ gives his flock a true spiritual freedom. If any man follow him, he has the promise that he may "go in and out, and find pasture." Many think Jesus a hard master; they speak of his disciples as in bondage,—the bondage of the Sabbath, of the church and the priest. But surely it is, in our land at least, a most extraordinary bondage, where one may spend the Sabbath in all the details of his conduct, just as he pleases, and so long as he does not disturb his neighbor, may enjoy the utmost liberty on that day. It is a rare servitude to the church, when one may join that communion or not, as he pleases, and can be placed under the inspection of no master but his God and his conscience, unless he voluntarily submit himself to it. The bondage too of the ministry, what is that? Does the national government require you to support a priesthood? Do our State laws exact of you a parochial tax? Is not the clergyman a pensioner on free contributions? So far from there being any servitude in our religious institutions, they who do not hear Christ, nor follow him, are the real slaves. Obey fashion, and what is your liberty? Follow the popular will, and tell us then, are you free? Is there no bondage in sin? Can we violate conscience and still enjoy inward peace and liberty? No, the flock of Jesus, they who take him for their leader, are the only ones who possess a genuine independence. All other shepherds engender bondage. In him alone can we enjoy the right of forming our own opinions on all doctrines and duties, and of demeaning ourselves as moral freemen.

Christ is a good shepherd because through him the soul finds spiritual rest. When we have been long scorched by the rays of sin, he guides us into the shades of penitence and peace. The lambs of his fold he carries in his arms. He loves little children, and so gentle are his manners, and so pleasant is his voice, that they run to his arms, and lean on his bosom. When we are wounded, when conscience afflicts us, it is Christ who heals and saves us. Into his fold the weary

may enter, and he shall watch and defend them from all evil. Out of Christ there is no rest for the soul. The guilty are startled at midnight. If they sleep it is only to dream of thieves and robbers, climbing up the fold, and seeking the life of the flock.

And now whose is the voice that we most willingly hear and obey? There is doubtless a sense in which all hearken to Christ. We do not deny directly his name. We observe the Christian Sabbath; we enter weekly a temple where Christ is preached. We go up and down the great pasture of life, and call ourselves Christians. But do we meantime give heed to our Shepherd? Do we attend to every sound of his voice? Have we placed ourselves for time and eternity under his holy guardianship? Is he our daily leader? In thought, speech, act, feeling, heart, interest, do we *follow* Christ?

How many, while they bear the name of the true shepherd, are actually and eagerly following some stranger guide. Voices which we "know not," counterfeit, alluring, soul-destroying voices, continually beguile us away from Jesus. They come in the night, when judgment is asleep, and we do not perceive our spiritual danger; softly do they draw near; with silence do they enter the fold; and they steal, and kill and destroy.

The voice of sense, how loud is it in the ear of thousands, how does it drown the still, small voice of Jesus. No seducers are more wily than our appetites. The lusts of the flesh are wolves indeed, lurking round our path, and as we feed in sweet pastures, they spring out of the forest, and catch and scatter and kill. Would men but keep under the body, would they only master as earnestly as they now obey their animal nature, Christ would have crowds in his fold. But so long as the flesh is warring against the spirit, and gaining such fearful victories, the voice of the good shepherd is raised in vain. Men's faith in the coming world is too weak to change their hearts and lives. The preaching of the pulpit is regarded by not a few as a mere spectacle. Business, money, gain, dress, food and drink, these are to them the only substantial things, the only realities. If one would obtain their hearing, he must appeal to their senses and to their material interests.

The voice of the multitude is a syren's song. We run

with the flock. Into danger, down dark valleys, over the precipice of moral death, how many hasten. Others are selfish, is the plea, so must we be. We cannot earn our bread, unless we are so. Some even deride a man as a weak enthusiast who talks of doing business with perfect honesty. If a neighbor acts on this principle, they will stand coolly by, and laugh at his weakness, and if by chance he falls a martyr to his integrity, he is consoled by the address, "You might have known you would fail. If you mean to insist on carrying out your principle, you must go to some other world!" Thieves to a man's character, robbers of his immortal soul, wolves to his moral life, are such counsellors.

To be benefited then by the voice of Christ, we are required to listen unto it. It is not enough that he speak to us. For eighteen centuries he has been speaking to the deaf and the dead. If the simple utterance of divine truth could have saved the world, no man under Gospel ministrations would ever have been lost. It is not our privileges, the Sabbath, the Bible, the preached word, a Christian atmosphere, that keep us under the good shepherd and lead us to the fold of life. It is reflection, solicitude, determination, repentance. It is being grounded in these things which makes one a true hearer of Christ. There must be a direct, personal, hearty interest in him.

But yet more is needed. One may hear much, think much, profess much, and even repent much, and still fall a prey to robbers and wolves. We must *follow* our shepherd. By cultivating spiritual affections, by seeking to grow in grace and in the love of God, by habitual devotion, by a holy conversation, consisting in brotherly love to all our race, candor, kindness, the doing as we would that others should do unto us, and especially by caring and laboring for the virtue and salvation of all we can influence, thus must we follow Christ. If we are under his inward guidance, consenting in our feelings, desires and motives to no master but him, then do we belong to his happy fold, and nothing shall take us from him.

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"MY FATHER WORKETH, AND I WORK."

With a Galilean neighbor  
Wrought the lowly Christ, — whose morn,  
Noon and night were full of labor,  
For to labor he was born.

There he wrought, with skill cousummate,  
Many years' protracted length;  
Axe and hammer, plane and plummet,  
Taxing all his youthful strength.

Sternest thought,—'mid fancy's roses  
Blooming, — led him on to find  
Nature and the truth of Moses  
Implements to build his mind.

Manhood came, — and lonely hours,  
Filled with highest, heavenly art,  
Summoned forth the godlike powers  
Of a Saviour's mighty heart.

Now the Father's agent, willing  
God alone to love and fear,—  
Lo, the Master-Spirit, — filling  
All the earth with love and prayer!

Hew thy wood: — with ready vigor  
Task thine intellectual force: —  
Most and highest court the rigor  
Of the toiling spirit's cross.

From Christ's brow the drops are raining,  
While we all too idly stand:  
To our work! the day is waning  
And the night is near at hand.

C. H. A. D.



## THOUGHTS ON DR. CHALMERS.

BY REV. S. W. BUSH.

BIOGRAPHY is fast becoming autobiography. The literature of the present times presents peculiar excellences in this species of composition. Now we discern more of the subject and less of the author. In "The lives of the Poets," for example, we see the subjects colored with all the prejudice and spleen of Johnson's mind. Milton and Savage are delineated as conceived by him. It is becoming more common to depart from this mode and to let the individual speak as much as possible for himself. This may confine the powers of the biographer and make his efforts more simple. What is lost however in variety and freedom is compensated by greater truthfulness. Eminent men, who have made a decided impression, come almost always into conflict with others' opinions and feelings. They are generally identified with some philosophical, literary or scientific movement, or connected with the struggles and controversies of sects and parties. Oftentimes the activities which are thus awakened exhibit the worst side of a man's character. We behold him from a peculiar point of view, and are thereby not always able, even if disposed, to give a fair judgment of his acts. We behold only results, not the sources of action. The latter — which constitute the moral qualities can be discerned only when we know all the motives and feelings which prompted the individual. These will be found in the privacy of friendly correspondence when the heart opens itself with unsuspecting freedom and confidence. These are the best materials of a true biography. The surest and most faithful method is to let the subject, as far as possible, give the memoirs of his own life. When complaints are made of such books as "The Life and Correspondence of Dr. Arnold," or "The Memoirs of Channing," on account of their minuteness of detail or the fullness of the letters and extracts from their journals, the object of these compositions must be kept in mind. It is one thing to write the biography of a man, quite another to give our own view of his character and opinions as reflected through our own prejudices.

These thoughts were suggested by the first volume of "The Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Dr. Chalmers, by his Son in Law." This book presents the features which have been referred to. It is to a great extent an autobiography. The private correspondence and journal of the subject constitute the chief materials, and they seem to have been used with truthfulness. Without entering upon an elaborate analysis of his mind and character we propose to glance at his early developments, "the period of growth and preparation."

Thomas Chalmers was born at Anstruther, on Friday, March 17th, 1780. He is remembered by his play-fellows as "one of the idlest, strongest, merriest, and most generous hearted boys" at school. He entered into all the fun and glee of childish sports with great zest. The Bible was early an object of attention. This was more, however, from its simple and beautiful delineations of character — those charms of our childhood — than from any deep religious feeling. We are told that when three years old, one evening after it had grown dark he was found alone in the nursery pacing up and down, excited and absorbed, repeating to himself as he walked to and fro, the words of David, "O my Son Absalom, O Absalom my Son, my Son."

His character first developed itself through the intellect. The sciences, especially mathematics, were his favorite studies in College; even these did not engage his attention until "the third session" which has been termed "his intellectual birth time." During his subsequent life he retained a keen relish for them. His theological attainments at the commencement of his ministry were very meagre. His early studies after his settlement increased his stores but little. He evidently was more interested with chemistry and mathematics than with theology. A few hurried moments snatched late on Saturday was all the time he gave for his Sunday preparation. His first years in the ministry were occupied with labors and plans which did not legitimately belong to his profession. This continued until his mind was awakened by the visitation of sorrow. A severe bereavement followed by a long illness produced a decided change in his feelings and aims. Life began to assume a new aspect. Before, religion had been secondary to intellectual pursuits and a desire for distinction. His own confession shows this. Speak-

ing of his life before he was thirty he says, "by far the greater part of that time there has been a total estrangement of my mind from religious principle : and my whole conduct has been dictated by the rambling impulses of the moment, without any direction from a sense of duty or any reference to that eternity which should be the end and the motive of all our actions."

Here is the commencement of his new religious life. Referring to this period he writes: "My confinement has fixed on my heart a very strong impression of the insignificance of time, an impression which I trust will not abandon me though I again reach the heyday of health and vigor. This should be the first step to another impression still more salutary, the magnitude of eternity. Strip human life of its connection with a higher scene of existence, and it is the illusion of an instant, an unmeaning farce, a series of visions and projects and convulsive effort which terminate in nothing." Pascal made a decided impression upon him at this time. "I have been reading," says he in a letter written at this time, "Pascal's 'Thoughts on Religion ;' you know his history,—a man of the richest endowment, and whose youth was signalized by his profound and original speculation in mathematical science, but who could stop short in the brilliant career of discovery, who could resign all the splendors of literary reputation, who could renounce without a sigh all the distinctions which are conferred upon genius, and resolve to devote every talent and every hour to the defence and illustration of the gospel. This is superior to all Greek and to all Roman fame." There were some points of resemblance between Pascal and Chalmers. Both at first devoted themselves with great earnestness and zeal to the study of science and renounced it in after life for the advancement and defence of religion — both were endowed with a glowing imagination — but the former was far superior in the higher forms of intellect and in the depth and power of religion as a sentiment of the heart. They both passed from the highest walks of science to the highest walk of faith.

Channing has been called the "American Chalmers." The two have few points of resemblance in their opinions — or the constitution of their minds. They grew up under different external circumstances — and became identified with dissimilar movements in theology. The mind of Chalmers was scientific. He delighted in the investigation of the properties

of matter — and the laws of quantity and motion. He was a man of detail rather than of broad generalizations. If he had the qualities of a leader, they were such as fitted him to guide an old, established form of opinion. He was not qualified to devolope new and original ideas, for though he had vigor and moral courage he was wanting in that creative power which is the attribute of high philosophic genius.

Channing on the other hand knew little or nothing of science, but grasping a few great central ideas with all the might of his intellect he carried them into the various forms of human life. He dwelt but little on facts as such. He rarely entered upon criticism, but aimed to unfold and illustrate principles. He rose from the contemplation of particular facts to universal laws. He was a leader in a new movement and probably quickened the intellectual activity of his times. This he accomplished more by the native force of his own mind than by varied or profound scholarship. The soul — its relations to others, society and God — were the topics which tried his spirit and warmed him into a lofty moral enthusiasm. In early life Channing was thoughtful, and even morbid in his religious feelings. He rarely gave himself up to the rude sports of childhood. From the first he seemed an observer of men and a reflective student. Chalmers on the contrary was full of physical life and entered with great zest and vigor into all the frolics and glee of childish sports. Their resemblance is slight. Both had moral courage, a down-right earnestness of purpose and great sincerity, and each occupied a commanding position and influence in the church.

The internal religious life of Chalmers' early period was barren of spiritual fruit. He entered into all the relations of the ministry with heartlessness. The first years of his preaching were a task, and he had no true religious idea of his vocation. He lived a life of external morality. His heart seemed to be insensible to the profound experiences which proceed from a deep spiritual insight — even in his after life religion appeared more like a graft than a natural growth. It is sad to see how his religion dwelt upon the surface. His journal abounds in a mere narration of facts and observances, and few reflections that evince spontaneous religious feelings. This is a low state of the soul ; — until religion proceeds from

a pure and deep love it does not exist in its highest form. As long as a man has to force himself to his prayers and engages in them from no higher motive than duty, he has not attained a full divine life. It is only when our human desires and will are in harmony with the divine will — when we pray from a yearning after God — and enter upon all our duties with a spirit of a free love that we are in true union with Christ — are truly born into the regenerate life of religion. As long as the soul is compelled to starve or lash itself into a routine of duties — to be good through the fear of hell or the bribe of heaven, it has not emancipated itself from a low spiritual phase — nor passed into that love which casteth out all fear. This stage however does not fall upon us at once. It is the highest result of a spiritual experience. Chalmers as exhibited in "his period of preparation" falls far short of the attainment of a religious life. His goodness was external and did not proceed from an internal vital faith which is the only real source of all genuine piety. We trust the other volumes will reveal to us more spontaneous religious feelings and less restraint. We shall follow the unfolding and growth of his experience with great interest and with the hope that, as his religion proceeded more from a profound conviction, it became a living principle, one which reflected more of the spirit of Christ and the loveliness of heaven.

We have been informed by those who are acquainted with Chalmers that he excited the warmest affection by his personal intercourse — and that he was an interesting and delightful man in his private conversation. The author has not shown this in the first volume. It wants more sprightliness to give it the character of a fresh delineation. It is stiff and lacks life. This may arise in part from the absence, in early life, of those qualities which in later years drew around him so many warm and devoted friends. Whatever may be the cause it is to be hoped that more liveliness and spirit will be imparted to those volumes which treat of the more advanced labors of this distinguished divine.

## THE BIBLE.

THE Bible! precious treasure!  
Given by love divine!  
The Spirit without measure,  
Promised to thee and thine.

No love that lights the ages  
So deep, so true, so pure;  
The learning of the sages  
Shows wisdom not so sure.

With faith and prayer I'll read it,  
God's spirit will me teach  
My duty—may I heed it,  
O let it to me preach.

And let my heart look heavenward,  
My body here below;  
To do the Spirit's bidding  
Oh let me humbly go,

And walk in any foot-path  
Howe'er obscure it be,  
And do the meanest work  
That God points out to me.

Thus let God's word so teach me  
My duty here on earth,  
That death's enshrouding slumber  
Shall be my heavenly birth.







## LIFE IN DEATH.

Not long since we passed the early hours of a summer Sabbath morning, in the quiet and retired cemetery, adjoining a beautiful village, which overlooks the banks of the Connecticut. The spot had evidently been selected as the last resting place of the departed, on account of its rich and varied beauty, while the hand of taste and affection had contributed not a little to increase the natural loveliness of the scene. No sound was to be heard, — none, save the music of the birds, carolling their morning hymn of praise; and as I seated myself beneath the broad shade of a noble elm, whose spreading branches waved in the fresh morning breeze, and scattered the early dew like pearls beneath them, I thought that I had never gazed upon a scene, more rich in its varied and quiet beauty. Around me were the dark pine forests, those “great temples of nature,” filled with glory, wonder and beauty, — beneath, the early mist was rolling in dark and heavy clouds over the valley, assuming every variety of shape and form, and revealing here and there, as it lifted its shadowy veil, the bright and sparkling waters of the river flowing on in their calm and quiet beauty. The fertile valleys tinged with every variety of green, and rejoicing in all the rich luxuriance of summer, were bright with the first tints of the early morning, while far in the distance the outlines of the Green Mountains could just be distinguished beneath the blue mist, which still rested over them like a cloud. Dew-drops were sparkling on every leaf and blade of grass, — white fleecy clouds flitted across the sky, their shadows dancing up and down the green hill sides, while the air was filled with the humming of insects, rejoicing in their brief life, and uniting their humble praise with that of all nature around them. Earth, air and sky were instinct with life, beauty and glory, and as my spirit drank in the perfect harmony of the scene and hour, I thought how truly Death itself became transformed, in this full revelation of the Father’s boundless love, — how fitting it was for the soul to bow down and worship in this great cathedral of nature, ere entering the earthly sanctuary for praise and adoration.

The mementoes of change, decay and death were indeed all round me, and on a little stone just at my feet was sculptured a rose-tree, with one flower half-blown, and another still a bud broken from the parent stalk, while at a little distance a white marble column, with a broken summit, typified plans unfinished, and hopes unfulfilled. I liked not the emblems,—they breathed not the christian's hope and faith. They spoke not of that higher life unfolded through Death, by which new energies, new powers, and wider spheres of progress and of duty are unfolded to the earnest and aspiring soul, of that heavenly kingdom where the rich buds of early promise shall bloom in never fading beauty and loveliness. But there was one little stone, beneath the shade of a noble elm, simple in form, and half hidden beneath the leaves of a rose, whose flowers lay in rich clusters over the grave, which touched me far more than the richer sculptured monuments of wealth and art. It was a small white marble cross engraved with the simple yet sublime words, "Life in Death." Here indeed, was the true emblem of the christian faith, and a clear revelation of the great christian thought of death, and as I thought of the yet unknown scenes of future life, and recalled those beautiful lines of a favorite hymn,

"One family, we dwell in him ;  
One church above, beneath ;  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream of death,"

the perfect stillness of the hour was broken by the unusual sound of the village bell, as it uttered its slow and solemn knell, for the departure of one, who, but a few short days before, was full of life and hope and joy. I knew not the little child, who thus early was called to her higher Home, but the hour and the season forcibly recalled the thought of one, gentle and beloved, who in the full maturity of youth and life, was taken from the circle of which she was the very soul and centre. In the early morning of a day like this, we gathered around her, and it seemed a fitting time to bear to her last resting place, one so pure and beautiful. No bell with its mournful notes struck upon the ear, but with the bright flowers of summer scattered all around her, she lay in her calm and holy beauty ;

and as we gazed upon the countenance so peaceful and tranquil, and remembered her parting expressions of faith and joy, the words of the Redeemer came home with a power never before felt, "whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall *never* die."

And why is it that there is so little feeling of *joyousness*, connected with this passage from the outer to the inner courts of the temple? Why is it that its very mention is so carefully avoided by many, or if spoken of, only in tones of subdued sadness, as if some dark spectre of grief were instantly to be summoned forth? Such was not the faith of those who learned from the Saviour himself the great purposes of life, — of those who visited the vacant sepulchre and whose feet rested on the ascension mount. "I am now," says the aged Apostle, "ready to depart having a desire to be with Christ. I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith. I have finished my course. And thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And in what glowing words does the beloved disciple express his full, calm feelings of joyous anticipation, when, his bodily vigor having decayed, and the snows of nearly a century having gathered upon his brow, he speaks of that "perfect love that casteth out fear," of having already "passed from death unto life," and then adds those sublime words, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as he is."

Far be it from us, to rebuke those natural feelings of grief, which cannot but mingle with our brightest hopes, in the departure of the revered and beloved of the home circle. None indeed, but those who have experienced such partings, can know the feelings of loneliness and bereavement which fill the soul at such hours, the keen sense of desolation, that time may alleviate, but can never wholly destroy. But why add to the sadness, which we cannot but feel at such seasons? — Why create an unnatural darkness around us, and shut out from our homes the cheerful light of heaven, and cast a sepulchral gloom on every thing around? No! let there be seriousness, — sadness even, but let the messenger of God also be welcomed with a holy joy, and let the beautiful words of nature still speak to us of the love of the Father, constant and unceasing. Let the graves of them we love no longer seem as

the place of darkness and silence and rest, but as in truth, the very "foot-prints of angels."

"Death is another life. We bow our heads  
At going out, we think, and enter straight  
Another golden chamber of the king's  
Larger than this we leave, and lovelier."

And how does the messenger of sorrow ever bear to the faithful spirit the richest blessings of trust and hope! Not *alone* do we remain to fulfil our appointed pilgrimage, for there are many forms around us which the outward eye sees not, and we listen silently to the sound of gentle voices, which the outward ear hears not. They come to us in our moments of temptation and trial, and whisper of strength and victory and progress; they hold converse with the spirit in hours of solitude and sadness, and breathe peace and hope into the soul,—and as they pass hence they leave behind them, as Elijah of old, their own rich mantles of power and love. And so there are a thousand joyous things in life unheeded when all seems bright about us,—but when the calm stream of prayer is supplied by sorrow and disappointment, new beauties and higher thoughts are revealed, and the faithful, simple performance of duty itself, in its triumph over mere feeling, brings its own deep reward, and chastened joy. It has been said beautifully and truly, "We walk here, as it were, in the crypts of life; at times from the great Cathedral above us we can hear the organ and the chanting of the choir; we see the light stream through the open door, when some friend goes up before us; and shall we fear to mount the stair-case of the grave, that leads us out of this uncertain twilight, into the serene mansions of the life eternal?"

And how beautifully to the spirit eye, do the most common scenes of life become transformed through the power of death! The places where those whom we love, were wont to dwell, are henceforth invested with a sacred and holy influence,—and to the earnest and thoughtful spirit, there comes the voice, bidding the soul bow down in reverence, for the spot on which it stands is holy ground. And so does every new departure of those whom we love, make the Home that is preparing for us, more beautiful,—for the Saviour has taught us,

that death is but an incident, and not even a transforming incident to the spirit. They wait to receive us, "with the same countenance of affection they wore upon earth, — but more lovely, more radiant, more spiritual. The far country towards which we journey seems nearer to us, and the way less dark; for some have gone before, passing so quietly to their rest, that day itself dies not more calmly."

We read in ancient story, that Cleombrotus, a Grecian youth, having read Plato's argument on the immortality of the soul, was so ravished by his descriptions of a future life, that unwilling to wait nature's dull course, he leaped into the sea, the sooner to be assured of the certainty of his hopes and anticipations. To him, the worth and dignity of this *present* life were unknown, — but should not a true Christian hope unite both worlds, and cause the bow of God's love to encompass both in its beautiful embrace? Will it not be gain to die, only through that inward life, which must make it Christ to live? Not to the sluggish and indifferent spirit are the rich consolations of immortality unfolded, "Whosoever *liveth*, and believeth in me shall never die." There is a Heaven even now and here to be experienced, and through the constant, daily striving of the soul after holiness, the temple of God may at length be erected in its perfect purity within the soul, and become a meet residence for the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Not by undervaluing the present existence, are we to learn to prize the glories yet to be revealed, for unless it be *Christ for us to live*, it cannot be gain for us to die. Then, and not till then can we be fully conscious of that "perfect love, that casteth out fear," for only the spirit that sees the Father's hand in the trials, as well as in the happiness, in the sorrows no less than in the joys of life, can possess that inward assurance, which has power to transform the "Reaper, whose name is Death," into the angel-messenger from the Father.

Such a faith, triumphant in *Life*, the daily, active busy life of each day, in its toil and its rest, its public business and its hours of retirement, — its struggles, hopes, fears and aspirations, — such a faith, vital, living, ever growing deeper, purer, and more fervent, as it passes through "the trivial round, and

common task," of daily duty, — such a faith can alone teach us the deep and holy meaning of those sublime words,

## LIFE IN DEATH.

"Whosoever *liveth*, and believeth in me, shall *never* die."

"My Father's house on high!  
Home of my soul, how near  
At times to faith's foreseeing eye  
Thy golden gates appear!

I hear at morn and even,  
At noon and midnight hour,  
The choral harmonies of heaven  
Celestial music pour.

Here is the body pent,  
Absent from Thee I roam;  
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent  
A day's march nearer home.

For ever with the Lord!  
Father, if 'tis thy will,  
The promise of that blessed word  
Even *here* to me fulfil.

Be Thou at my right hand,  
Then can I never fail;  
Uphold thou me, and I shall stand;  
HELP, AND I MUST PREVAIL."

H. M.



## CHILDREN AND THEIR ANGELS.

A SERMON, BY REV. JOHN PIERPONT.

MATTHEW XVIII. 10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.

By "these little ones" of whom the Saviour here speaks, some expositors understand the poor, the humble, the obscure, among his disciples ; — those who were little known, and, perhaps, still less esteemed, among those of his time, who had professed their faith in him, and were resolved to follow him. But, in as much as the words of the text follow in immediate connexion with the account of our Lord's having called a little child to him, and set him in the midst of the disciples who were inquiring of him who should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and said to them, "except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" — "and whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me, and whoso shall offend — or rather whosoever shall cause one of these little ones to fall or stumble in his way, — it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea ;" — it seems to me more consistent with the tenor of the discourse, and more illustrative of the tender and beautiful spirit of the gospel of Jesus, to understand him here as speaking literally ; and as giving his disciples, of every age, instruction relative to their duties to young children in general ; and, in particular, the duty of holding them in high consideration, and treating them, not with tenderness, merely, but with respect.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones". To this precept we owe a prompt obedience, if we regard it even as resting on authority alone — the authority of him who has given it to us. But, in as much as we are more apt to obey a precept, of which we see the reasons, and feel the propriety, than one which rests upon the ground of authority merely;

and in as much as it is not often that the Supreme Ruler of men gives, for their government, injunctions or laws for which no reason can be assigned except that of his authority; it is the object of this discourse to set forth some of the various ways in which the precept before us may be understood, in close connexion with some of the reasons or considerations by which it may be enforced.

1. "Despise not one of these little ones." The precept is addressed to all, but especially to parents. We understand it as saying, in the first place to all of us who stand in that relation — "Despise not the *simplicity* of your little ones." For, in the first place why should they — nay — how could they be other than simple. They have not been long enough in a world of intrigue and management to have learned any thing of the little that is to be gained by management and intrigue. And if you have learned much of this yourselves, will you not say that they are happier and better in their ignorance of this, than you are with your knowledge? And, in the second place, consider that if they are ignorant of the arts, and of the duplicity, by which those, who have more knowledge of the world than they have, sometimes gain their ends, — they are at the same time, and most happily for them, ignorant of the contamination of the spirit, and debasement of the desires and of the feelings, which too often — nay almost always — accompany an accurate knowledge of men and great skilfulness in the management of them. Despise them not, then, thou wary and crafty proficient in the knowledge of mankind, — for if they have not thy knowledge, neither hast thou their innocence.

2. Despise not the *amusements* and *enjoyments* of these little ones. Their enjoyments are as wisely adapted to their capacity of enjoying as are your enjoyments to yours. Their amusements afford them those enjoyments. Look not on them, then, with contempt, thou "wise and prudent." Look back rather upon thine own, when thou wast thyself among the little ones, and say, — what hast thou found since, of enjoyment, in thy pursuits, or thy gains, or thy pleasures, which has afforded thee in thy manhood, — a purer, sweeter, better enjoyment, — one on which thou dost even now look back with more delight, than thou dost upon the pleasures of thy child-

hood ; — thy sports, thy young efforts of strength or skill, thy diversions, when alone, or when in society ; — thine enterprises, so engrossing and momentous then — but so apparently childish now ? Perhaps those hours which in childhood were devoted to the pleasures and amusements of children, may, even now, come up from among the years that have sunk into the depth of eternity, as the brightest and happiest that will ever have been allowed thee. Do not, then, with the gravity and severity that age and care have brought you — age, that has left you fewer years, and care, that has embittered many of those that are past — do not despise the amusements and pleasures in which those who are now the little ones engage, and which they will remember, with an innocent though melancholy satisfaction, in the years that will soon be drawing nigh, when they shall say, “ We have no pleasure in them.”

3. Again, — “ despise not the *weakness* of the little ones around you,” says the spirit of the text unto us all. Their weakness will soon give place to strength. Abuse not that weakness, then ; — for, if you do, their coming strength will take vengeance when your own strength shall have departed. Or, if they spare you, with a magnanimity of which you have set them no example, you will feel yourself more humbled in being thus spared, than the object of your abuse ever felt himself humbled by your barbarous severity. A child early learns to distinguish between the shades of guilt, and consequent ill desert in different offences ; and to strike a tolerably accurate balance between the provocation that he has given, and the chastisement that he has received for it. And if the latter is greatly disproportionate to the former, the wrong will be felt — will be remembered — and, if he shows you not more mercy than you showed him justice, — it will be avenged. Whether it be found in parents, or in teachers, or in masters, or in any other who has the temporary advantage of greater strength, the contempt of a child’s weakness, or the hard usage or abuse that grows out of a presumption upon that weakness, is, not unmanly, — it is savage — it is beastly : — nay it is worse ; for savages are rarely guilty of it, and beasts never.

Besides, consider, that it may be your lot to lean, for support and comfort, upon the weakness that you now despise. That weakness shall then have become strength, and your strength

weakness. By the toil of that feeble arm, you may, in coming years, be fed and clothed ; by its valour you may be defended, in the enjoyment of your home, while you live ; and by its strength when you are dead, your remains may be let down into the bosom of the grave.

4. Again, The language of the text to us all is, "Despise not the *passions* of these little ones." We may find a pleasure — a base and most sinful pleasure — in stirring up the anger of little children by petty irritations that, in their momentary heat, they may make us sport. How often do we see instances of this folly, nay this wickedness ! And how often do we see the rage into which a child has been thus foolishly thrown, as foolishly laughed at, because it is imbecile, and because it can be still more exasperated by being restrained from violence. — Despise not that anger — thou fool who hast excited it. It may indeed soon die, — it may live, too, and live to thy sorrow. If thou art a parent, thou mayst rue it in the going down of thy sun. It may live in the bosom of thy child till, in time, it shall make havoc of thine own grey hairs ; and, if thou art not a parent, the time may come when thou shalt be, and when thou shalt see the children, whom thou lovest, thrown into a rage that might become a fiend, by some one as fiendlike as thyself.

Despise not the passions of one of these little ones. Excite not his hopes, when you do not mean to gratify them. He will remember how cruelly you have once disappointed him, and will afterwards distrust you. Sport not with his fears, when there is nothing for him to dread. Laugh not at his griefs. They are sacred things in his eyes ; and, if he sees that they are jeered at and scorned by you — do not afterwards ask his sympathy in those griefs of your own which shall make your heart bleed, if it does not break. Nay, beware lest he be himself, a grief to you — too heavy to be borne, and too serious to be derided.

5. In the fifth place, despise not the *affections* of one of these little ones. The thousand little endearments by which children testify their love to you ; — their innocent and affectionate caresses ; — the promptness with which they admit you into their confidence ; — their willingness to minister to those whom they love ; — the freedom with which they pour out their child-

ish griefs into your ear; — the respect which they show to your counsels — the sorrow that they evince at your sufferings — are these — are all these, things which you despise? — ye great ones, and ye proud! If so, — let not me be classed with the things that you hold in high esteem. — Is there not in the intercourse of young and affectionate hearts, more gained on the score of real enjoyment, by the more aged and the more wise, than is gained by the young from their intercourse with *them*? And, let not the affections of the young for one another — their young attachments even though they may appear to you romantic — their esteem for their fellows, though it may appear to be without the most solid foundation — their confidence — though it may be given and received without much evidence of trustworthiness, — let not these things be treated lightly by you in their presence. They are holy things in the sight of the children themselves; and they really are the elements of those attachments, and of those ties which, in a few years, are to bind society together, when the ties and attachments, which you now feel, for those around you, shall all have been weakened by time, or broken up by death.

6. And sixthly, — if we may not despise the affections of these little ones by whom we are always surrounded in the world — so neither may we their *intellectual powers*: or shall we say rather their intellectual weakness and wants? — Why shall these be despised even by the intellectual giants of their race — the Lockes, the Miltons, the Franklins and the Newtons — Oh, these are not the names of men by whom little children were despised. The greatest of men are to be found among those who have most lastingly benefitted their race by their labors in the great field of intellectual improvement. Their names become familiar words with children. Their minds have gone forth, and searched

“on unwearied wing,  
By sea and shore, each mute and living thing,”

that the young spirit might be awakened from its sleep — might be called to its labour, — be strengthened by its exercises — disenthralled from all dominion but that of truth and goodness, — and qualified for the high ministrations and enjoyments of an eternal being. And, consider, that men like these, who have thus honored their country and blessed the world,

were, but a few years before they thus labored, among the little ones, whom the Saviour taught his disciples not to despise, and who, not improbably by the influence of that very precept, were raised to the high rank they held among men, and qualified for communion with higher, more purely intellectual, and more holy natures.

Consider, too, how many things are gathering around these little ones and looking to their powers, as intellectual and moral beings, for their future support. Among these things is your own form, bowing with years and moving onward to the place of its rest : — When you shall have fallen asleep, or even before that time — the honour of your house — your country, that year after year is standing up under a more and more exceeding weight of glory, — glory that must be upheld — upheld by the powers of these little ones, or forever lost ; — the glory of its wealth — of its strength — of its literary institutions, — of its churches — of its senate halls, — of its cabinets — of its tribunals, awful in their incorruptible justice ; the glory of its name on the shore, and on the seas, and among the nations of the whole earth : — all these things are to be upheld by the intellectual powers of the little ones of our time, — enlightened and strengthened, and controlled, as those powers may be, and should be, by a wise practical and religious education. — Despise not, then, these powers, though they are now in their infancy. Reverence them rather — call them out — exercise, task, control them ; — fit them in season to do that well, which they must do soon ; — or must lamentably fail to do — to their own disgrace, and to the everlasting reproach of their parents and teachers.

7. In the next place, despise not the *society* of these little ones, whom the kind providence of God has placed around you : — a providence not less kind to yourselves than to them. What though you gain not much information from their remarks ! They are not to be despised on that account. And, besides ! — are you to associate with none but those who may instruct you by their conversation ? What, then, is your understanding of these words — “ It is more blessed to give than to receive ? ” But you may draw instruction from the lips of children. If they are encouraged to open their minds freely to you, you cannot fail of doing this. You will often learn



your own little peculiarities of language and manner which have escaped your own observation, but cannot escape theirs. And they will tell you of faults or defects, which a man, your equal, would not dare to name to you. By their inquiries, too, they will often set you upon a train of thought which may lead to important consequences to yourself, or may lead you only to the conviction that there are subjects of serious moment on which you know little more than the child that comes to you for information. [It is not many days since I heard this question proposed by a very young child to his father — "How long shall I be in the grave before I go to heaven?" A question — I need not say, — that has divided the opinions of the most profound theologians and metaphysicians for ages, and one which, in this life, will, probably, never be satisfactorily settled.] Besides, how rapidly is the hour advancing upon us all when, if we live, the society of those who now are children will be necessary to our comfort — will be to us as the light of the sun in the evening of our day! But it cannot instantly become so when we need it. We must, by degrees, and by long and familiar association, accommodate our feelings to their age and pursuits, and theirs to our increasing infirmities of body and mind. Shall that society then, on which we are, ourselves, to be so dependent hereafter, be despised by us now?

8. In the eighth and last place, we may understand the text as commanding us not to despise the *testimony* which the little ones around us will bear, for or against us, in this life and in that which is to come.

The reputation which each one of us is acquiring while we are here, must soon be left in the custody of those who shall come after us. The language of the text to us severally is, Despise not one of these little ones, for you are soon to be in their power, your name upon the earth will be such as they shall represent it, and hand it down to those who shall come after them, — or if perchance, they do *not* preserve it, it will be because, in their opinion, it is not worth preserving. Look with reverence upon the children who are around you, when you are devising or practising evil. They will remember it against you, and give you an evil name. Despise not now the witness that they will bear: for your own lips will have been sealed in death, and you cannot contradict them. Your *good* name, too, is



to be left in their charge. Despise not the hands that shall trace it with reverence and pass it down to posterity. — Look not contemptuously on those whose eyes are to brighten hereafter when your name is called, — whose lips shall speak it as that of a benefactor to the young — whose heart shall beat quicker and stronger, as your image, — long after your departure from the world — shall come up before their memory as that of the venerable prophet did before the eyes of the king of Israel, — like a god coming forth from the grave. O despise not the witness which these little ones shall bear concerning thee, while they are in the land of the living!

And, for a still stronger reason, despise not the testimony which they shall give concerning thee before the dread tribunal of the world to come. — Some one of the little ones around us will undoubtedly go before us into the world of spirits. — Each of these, with whom we have stood in relation of parent, or teacher, or guide and guardian, will bear his witness concerning us, at the bar of God. Can any one of us dare to despise that testimony? The cold, marble lips through which the departed spirit passed shall indeed move no more. They are sealed forever. The parental kiss which they have so often felt and returned, they never again shall feel, and shall never return again. They are sealed — and so is the testimony with which the spirit that has left them, is charged. That spirit — does it not live in the presence of the Eternal Father? Does not the angel that guarded it here, and that bore it hence, behold the face of our Father who is in heaven? Thus attended — thus introduced to the presence of the majesty on high, — thus associated with those who are greatest in the kingdom of heaven — dare you despise the testimony it shall bear before the throne of the Almighty Judge? — Does it not mourn that it must bear witness to your unfaithfulness — to your neglect — to your cruelty — to your bad example — all which, — had it not been early withdrawn from your power, would have corrupted and destroyed it? And yet, if you have been thus guilty, will not that young spirit give that witness against you? — though it gives it in with grief? And dare you despise the testimony that goes up to the throne, from the spirit of a little child? Despise it if you will — if you dare. But it will be

heard, and borne in everlasting remembrance, by him that sitteth on the throne.

But on the other hand—how consoling is the thought that we have so regarded the little ones who have been the companions of our way in life, and have so answered the claims of duty towards them, that every one of them who goes before us into the spiritual world shall go with a testimony *for us* :—a testimony which it shall form one of the first joys of its heaven to give in !—Our instructions—counsels—exhortations—prayers—all these the young spirit—disenthralled from earth, and from earth's passions and sufferings—bears up with the strength of an angel's wing, and spreads out rejoicing before the all-seeing eye. Is it no pleasure to us to know that such a testimony *has* been given, and is *recorded* ? Can we think upon it with indifference—still less can we despise it ?—Is not the hour coming rather,—do we not *feel* that it is—when this testimony from the pure lips of “babes and sucklings”—lips that have been warm with affection for *us*—and that now burn with the love of *truth* and of *God*—shall be heard by our own spirits, standing in judgment,—with a joy which nothing on this side of the grave could awaken ?—We cannot—we cannot—despise such a testimony from the little ones who go before us to their rest and their rewards.

Can we secure this testimony in our own favor ? Is it not worth securing ? We can secure it by obeying the injunction of our Saviour, in taking heed that we despise not any one of these little ones around us whom he has held up as emblems of the kingdom of heaven. We can secure it by becoming like little children ourselves in simplicity, humility and innocence ; and by laboring to make them, like their Lord and ours, to grow in knowledge and virtue as they grow in stature ;—and, as they increase in years, to increase in favour with God and man.

## POEMS BY ROBERT BROWNING.

2 vols.

"There is delight in singing, though none hear  
Beside the singer, and there is delight  
In praising, though the praiser sit alone  
And see the praised far off him, far above."

*Lander to Browning.*

How mighty soever the stream of inspiration that flowed through the verse of Wordsworth, the channel was cut with extremest care, and every joint was fitted with slow and patient labor; he, standing like the great Master Builder at Cologne, entirely at ease amid the centuries, looking to a future hidden in Eternity, caring little to hurry while he felt that he had forever to work in. The minute and studied survey befitting the works of the dead laureate is little suited to England's greatest living poet.

Robert Browning has a two fold interest for us. Of himself, that since "Chancer was alive and hale," no man has used the English language with such hearty force and genuine purity. Of his wife, she of whom we know little, but that she is wise and good,—that she was for years the invalid inmate of a darkened chamber, when she plumed herself for a flight, that for a time at least, drew England's eyes from Browning to herself. Wise were they in good truth to unite their forces, who had else divided not only their whole realm but our republic. Elizabeth Barrett is the friend of the American slave, for that we thank her; that she is the friend of all who are oppressed and suffering the world over, needs no witness of ours. She is at Florence, now, with her husband, and rumor tells us that they have a child. The child of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning! To what an inheritance is it born! The inheritance of so wide a knowledge, so full and generous a heart, so rich and active a sympathy as that of these two made one, involves a responsibility to God and man, from which, could it but look forward, it well might shrink. The most remarkable traits in Browning seem to us, the wide scope of his thought, the almost unconscious purity of his purpose, and the dramatic force of his words. "Paracelsus," the long-

est and least interesting poem that he has published, does not invite our criticism. We would win readers for his shorter and less mystical pieces, and leave Bombast to his fate.

Sweet and fair as a dewy spring morning opens upon us the lovely conception of "Pippa Passes." The women of the drama are apt to be the merest sketches. Lifelike enough if you look at them from one side, in a particular light, but far from proving creatures of real flesh and blood, like Miss Brontë's "Jane Eyre." This criticism applies in part to Browning, but hardly to the "Pippa Passes." The women introduced into it are so terribly real, pictured with so true a knowledge, that of some you shudder to think the poet passed them near enough to catch their foul breath; of Pippa, you pray that so pure a spirit may often cross and bless his path. The office of genius, it seems to us, is to reproduce what is pleasant and healthy and uplifting. It is this thought that makes some persons shrink from such sketches as Ottima Sebaldo and the four courtesans in Pippa. Such portraits remind us of the great "Dissection" by Rembrandt, of which the highest praise is the severest condemnation. But for the Poet there is an argument on the other side. We are uplifted by whatever reveals to us the loathsomeness of vice, and in the present instance the depth of Browning's shadow is needed, to show the world how utter night may be irradiated by purity like Pippa's.

The girls at the silk mill have but one holiday yearly. Pippa is one of them, and as she springs blithesome from her bed, she meditates the worth of that one day. She fancies herself in turn the four happiest of Asolo's simple inhabitants, and seems to pity them, that they have no one day to make much of. As for their other joys, she will share them in fancy the day through; who shall hinder? She will be in turn the mistress, bride, mother, devotee, and she is wise enough to know that the safest love of all, is the love of God. In the midst of her happy review, she pauses to catch a sunbeam, and finally cripples it with a splash from her ewer. The verses which describe this are unmatched for grace and delicacy. Singing her New Year's Hymn, she wanders forth to watch for happiness, — to others also an angel watch and ward.

The scene changes, and introduces us to such a home as is the lot of the proud Ottima, the mistress of the German Sebald, upon whom Pippa's pure thought had rested for a moment. The old husband to whom this young beauty had been sacrificed, has been murdered in the night. Sebald has been intoxicated with passion, but morning breaks and his delirium with it. The power of gross passion, and the greater power of innocence coming by awful surprise on guilt, is nowhere so forcibly depicted. To Sebald, day is now but

—"night with the sun added."

By a strong effort, but with true feminine disinterestedness, the woman forgets her own panic, and strives to lure him back to his old love. Ottima had nearly succeeded. Sense had once more nearly conquered soul, and Sebald had lost not only earth but the heaven of the repentant, when the pure voice of Pippa broke on the air,

"God's in his Heaven,  
All's right with the world."

Light broke on the guilty man, and Ottima is "emptied of her power." "Her breath is worse than wine." He drives her from him. Ottima could sin and never blench, but she cannot love alone. Brief anger is succeeded by bitterest despair. He speaks *of* her, not *to* her. She dreads *not* perdition, but his change. She gives him poison or other means of death. As his agony comes on, she offers her support, and there is a touching power in the humility born of the instant, which adds,

"Don't love me  
The more because you lean on me, my own,"

and her womanhood returns to her at the last, where, wholly forgetting her own approaching death, she prays

"Not to me, God, to him be merciful."

There are such women, and this scene shows the link between them and their sex, offers a lever to philanthropy. It is through their *love*, that women like Ottima must be moved. It must be turned from man to Truth and God.

The third part of "Pippa" opens with merry talk between some wild and dissipated students who have been plotting a practical jest on a purer companion. A new comer remonstrates. They have carried on a forged correspondence and inveigled Jules into a marriage with a young Greek. The new student thinks the disappointment will wipe off the early dew of Jules' youth. Another moralizes, as well as a man can who carries a pipe in his mouth, to the contrary of this. They assemble to watch the return of the bride and groom from church, and to see that in his first disappointment Jules does not harm the budding girl. Poor Phené, carried into a higher heaven by the magic of her lover's voice, almost forgets the part which she does not understand, taught her by those wicked wits. Jules wonders that she does not speak. "If I do not try," she says,

"It is to keep myself  
Where your voice lifted me."

At last she falters out the truth. At first Jules offers her money, and refuses to meet his bride again, but "Pippa passes," singing a love-song of one who was so high above her lover that her presence only rebuked his love. A new light breaks on Jules' mind. He gazes on the Greek child ;

"fresh upon her lips  
Alit the visionary butterfly."

He sees the spirit opening to his "Sesame." His meditation is very beautiful. There is true agony in the cry put up by every one of us at least once in our lives,

"Oh, to hear  
God's voice plain, as I heard it first, before  
They broke in with that laughter!"

His great heart conquers, he carries his girl-bride away where they may enter life together. There is the true sublimity of genius in the last words he speaks of him who played this trick upon him :

"Shall I meet Lutwych,  
And save him from my statue meeting him?"

The next scene opens with a talk between an English vagabond and the Austrian police on the watch for Luigi, a young

Italian patriot, suspected at head-quarters. Luigi has been a tender, loving son, has a sensuous nature, open to all the richness of the natural world. He hates to leave sunshine and moonlight for the dungeon or the scaffold. His mother tempts him to forget his duty by the sweet picture of his young love,

"with her blue eyes upturned  
As if life were one long and sweet surprise,  
In June she comes."

She would have overcome his patriotism in this way, but "Pippa passes," singing of that "grace kings had when the world began," and Luigi, braced to his duty, is saved by immediate departure for the scene of it, from the intended arrest of the police.

Last comes an interview between the beloved of God and his Intendant, one whom we do not libel if we call him the beloved of the Devil. Monseignor suspects his rascality, pins him as one might a dead beetle, finds out that Pippa is his brother's child, long supposed to be dead, that the rascally Intendant means to beguile her to her death of soul and body. Just at the moment "Pippa passes," and from without is heard the music of her sweet greenwood song, filling with indignant virtue the soul of her uncle. He arrests the family myrmidon in spite of family pride, and we conjecture that henceforth sweet Pippa has a right to more than one holiday in the year. To close the picture we go once more to her airy chamber, as she undresses for the night. Sweet and pure as summer breezes are the lines in which she meditates the events of the day. Little she thinks of all those pert girls said to her. The sense of it entered not the narrow chamber of her pure experience.

"It had done me,  
However, surely no such mighty hurt  
To learn his name, who passed that jest upon me,"

she said, and so dismissed the matter.

Her meditations on the pampered double heart's-ease she plucked in the morning from Ottima's bed, are as fresh, original and to the point as could well be written. One can see the



Amateur rejoicing over the red nose of the Zanze, and proclaiming,

"'Twas but white when wild she grew."

It hits the fancy of one who loves wild flowers. Reverent meditation on service and love closes the day, for the tired, pure-hearted silk-weaver and song-singer, whom God bless for the pleasure she has brought us.

The Dramatic Lyrics, in the second volume, open with the Cavalier Tunes, so widely popular. One's heart dances to their well-remembered rhythm, long after one has forgotten the words. There is nothing of the sort more beautiful than the Poem of 'Count Gismond.' The happy wife and mother tells to a friend the story of her marriage. As she recalls the old insult which her husband resented,

— "the old mist again  
Blinds her as then it did,"

and to the inquiry of her friend she replies,

"I? What I answered? As I live  
I never fancied such a thing  
As answer possible to give.  
What says the body when they spring  
Some monstrous torture engine's whole  
Strength on it? No more says the soul!"

Many a woman's dumb heart takes courage from these lines as her faith finds sympathy in those that follow :

"This glads me most, that I enjoyed  
The heart of the joy, with my content  
In watching Gismond unalloyed  
By any *doubt* of the event.  
God took that on Him. I was bid  
Watch Gismond for my part; I did."

She cannot repeat to any one the words of love whose slightest intonation is still fresh in her ear. She goes on to tell, how her two boys preserve in different ways the lineaments of their father's love and pride, but in the midst of it Gismond returns. What a touch of nature, of sweet womanly evasion, in the concluding lines !

"And have you brought my tercel back?  
I just was telling Adela  
How many birds it struck since May."

It seems that few persons enter into and enjoy the *humor* in many of Browning's Lyrics. In the "Soliloquy in the Spanish Cloister," it oozes out between the syllables. The humble brother ordered by his abbot to water his flowers, does it with some spirit and a grumbling warfare that betrays some monastic secrets. His indignation at the exclusive appropriation of a new goblet and spoon causes the early death of the friar's favorite lily, and instead of regretting the accident, the monk goes on to express his conviction that Brother Lawrence has carried the title of Saint somewhat too easily. He notes how often said saint forgets the minor observances of the order, and with what suspicious sympathy his eyes glisten when Gipsy lovers near the convent walls. He rejoices inwardly when the friar complains that there are no fruit blossoms on his plants, that he succeeds in keeping them "close nipped on the sly," and so disappoints the hopes of his hated superior. Poor unhappy Dominican, we of the world can sympathize in your horror of the vice you have no mind to imitate, while you are incapable of the virtue to which it chooses to pay homage.

The "Songs in a Godola" follow, full of exquisite poetry and passionate power. Would that we could give to them a holy as we are forced to give a hearty admiration. Great favorites with us are the two lyrics about Waring, shadowing forth in their sweet playful way the history of many a soul gifted perhaps like that of Coleridge, proud, claiming as a *birth-right* what the world will never give till it is *earned*, quitting it in distaste, and while all the faithful are looking towards the Vishnu land for the Avatar, indolently dreaming away its life under a lateen sail! Heaven send some special prophet to save the multitude of such from their cigars.

"Christina" is a rare love-song, recognizing as such things seldom do, the impossibility of our losing the love we have given. It always returns to bless us, to draw us near to God, and in honoring the loveliness of another to double our own. The two "Scenes in a Madhouse" are full of power. "Splendor proof," the dim soul

"Keeps the brood of stars aloof,"

that it may get to God, and when the lover has opened the lids of his strangled Porphyria, lids, "like shut buds that hold a

bee," he rests the dear head on his shoulder, and listens for that voice which is to rouse his slumbering intellect and show him to himself a broken-hearted rather than a sinful man.

"And all night long, we have not stirred,  
And yet God has not said a word!"

Browning's peculiar appreciation of the dramatic power of language is aptly shown in the rush and hurry of the Arab ride through the Metidja, and the expressive force of the "Pied Piper." There is a delicate touch in the "Italian in England" where the patriot says to the peasant woman,

"whose faith was shown  
To Italy, our mother; she  
Uses my hand and blesses thee."

"All the memories pluckt at Sorrento," "The flowers or the weeds," are very precious. The whole piece needs to be read in a hurried but distinct tone, that one may hear the gathering and rush of the Scirocco in the woods; and pertinent indeed is the close where after marking with a master's hand all the minute signs of its presence he adds,

"'Such trifles'—you say?  
Fortie in my England at home  
Men meet gravely to-day  
And debate, if abolishing Corn Laws  
Is righteous and wise!  
If 't is proper Sirocco should vanish  
In black from the skies!"

It would be a strange topic, which Browning as he sings could not turn to a wise and kind purpose. "The Lost Leader" and "The Lost Mistress" all can appreciate.

Robert Browning to our thinking needs one improvement. A mind on fire like his might give dramatic power to sentiment, to intellectual struggles, disappointments and deserts; as it is, *almost* all his dramatic force is gained from the narrow observation of passion. Hence, as in the Songs in a Gondola, one's love of poetry and one's love of God may not burn together on his altar, but through the thin blue sacrificial flame, flares up ever and anon the hot red blaze of the common fire born of earth's necessity, not of its heaven-aspirings.

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## INTELLIGENCE.

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**ORDINATION AT NEWBURYPORT, MASS.**—Mr. Charles J. Bowen, recently of the Theological School at Cambridge, was ordained at Newburyport, on Wednesday, November 21, 1850. There was no ecclesiastical council,—the Newburyport parish thus adding another to the multiplying examples of the omission of this usage, grown of late rather inefficient, if not something worse. The services were as follows:—Introductory Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Woodbury of Concord, N. H.; Reading Scriptures, by Rev. Mr. Frothingham of Salem; Sermon, by Rev. Dr. Putnam of Roxbury; Prayer of Ordination, by Rev. Dr. Miles of Lowell; Charge, by Rev. Dr. Hall of Providence, R. I. Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Ware of Cambridgeport; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Huntington of Boston.—The evening previous a sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Huntington of Boston, and devotional services were conducted by Rev. Mr. Ware of Cambridgeport.

**INSTALLATION AT HAVERHILL, MASS.**—Rev. Frederick Hinckley, recently Minister at Norton, was installed in Haverhill, on Wednesday, Nov. 13, 1850. We have not been informed respecting the services further than that the sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Briggs of Plymouth; and that Rev. Dr. Francis, Rev. A. P. Peahody, Rev. H. F. Harrington, and Rev. J. Richardson were expected to participate.

**DEDICATION AT WAYLAND, MASS.**—The meeting-house, having undergone a reconstruction, was dedicated November 13, when an Introductory Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Wight; Reading Scriptures, by Rev. Dr. Field of Weston; Prayer of Dedication, by Rev. Calvin Lincoln; Sermon, by Rev. E. H. Sears; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Charles C. Sewall.

**ITEMS.**—Rev. Mr. Livermore is about leaving East Cambridge, and Rev. Mr. Motte is about leaving Brattleboro', Vt.—Rev. Mr. Thurston is supplying for the present at South Natick, Rev. Mr. Pettes at Billerica, and Rev. Mr. Snow at Greenfield.—Steps have been taken towards planting new Societies in Clinton, Mass.,—a manufacturing village near Lancaster,—and in York, Pa.

# INDEX.

## MISCELLANY.

- A GLIMPSE of Wordsworth and Tal-  
 fourd in 1842, 422.  
 A Lesson from Juste Lipse, 297.  
 An Incident at Galilee, 309.  
 Annual Gatherings, 312.  
 Autumn Leaves, 132.  
 Charity and Unity, 140.  
 Chasm of the Ausable, 448.  
 Christ ever with us, 437.  
 Christ Feeding the Multitude, 341.  
 Christian Submission, 137.  
 Doctor Martin Gay, 141.  
 Doctrine in the Sunday School, 481.  
 Editor's Collectanea, 46, 236.  
 Efficacy of Prayer, 455.  
 Elements of Retribution in the Soul  
 Itself, 53.  
 Epicurean Theory of Life, 361.  
 Epiphany, 83.  
 Existence of God Proved from the  
 Order and Beauties of Nature, 254.  
 How to make Children Happy, 398.  
 Isaac Penington, 241.  
 Ineffectual Prayers, 97.  
 Joan of Arc Burned by the English,  
 443.  
 Lesson from John XI., 456.  
 Letter from a Sister, III., 185.  
 Letters from Washington, 90, 277, 375.  
 Letter to a Single Lady, 433.  
 Life in Death, 553.  
 Lying, 196.  
 Man as he was and as he is, 198.  
 Mrs. Adelia E. Smith, 512.  
 My Native Village, 271.  
 My Neighbor's Chimney, 214.  
 New Books, 334, 518.  
 Noah and the Flood, 529.  
 Notices of Books, 190, 429.  
 Observations on the Bible, 385.  
 Observations on the Old Testament,  
 289.  
 Old Age in Christ Jesus, 226.  
 Passages from the Papers of a Mis-  
 sionary, 23, 173, 476.  
 Peabody's Literary Remains, 234.  
 Poems by Robert Browning, 568.  
 Protestantism Independent of a Suc-  
 cession, 175.  
 Publications, 94.  
 Relationships, 337.  
 Remarks on the Spirit of Sects, 493.  
 Sabbath Communings, 231, 316, 395.  
 Strength out of Weakness, 445.  
 Study of Nature, 359.  
 Summer Thoughts, 408.  
 Sunday at Home, 188.  
 The Abbé, 193.  
 The Anonymous Work of Art, 255.  
 The Bud of Promise, 72.  
 The Christian Denomination, 427.  
 The Emigrant, 145.  
 The Female Philosopher; or, Egypt  
 in the Fourth Century, II., 31.

- The Gloomy Land, or the Deliverer, 42.  
 The House, 10, 61, 104.  
 The Old Church, 49.  
 The Secret of Success, 154.  
 The True Sphere of Life, 304.  
 The Voice of Jesus, 538.  
 The Word of God, 25.
- Thoughts on Dr. Chalmers, 547.  
 "Truth Stranger than Fiction," 381.  
 What is the Truest Charity? 497.  
 What we Ought to be Doing at the West, 125.  
 Youth of Chateaubriand, 349.  
 Zwingle and Luther, 459.

## SERMONS.

- A Sermon of Consolation,—by Rev. Joshua Young, 414.  
 Children and their Angels,—by Rev. John Pierpont, 559.  
 Christ Among the Children,—by Rev. F. A. Farley, D. D., 353.  
 Hope in God.—by Rev. James Flint, D. D., 163.  
 National Dangers, and Duties,—by Rev. F. N. Knapp, 468.  
 Quiet Work,—by Rev. William Mountford, 258.  
 Salvation through the Jews,—by Rev. N. L. Frothingham, D. D., 73.
- The Believer Doing Greater Works than Christ,—by Rev. R. L. Carpenter, 114.  
 "The Game of Life,"—by Rev. Geo. Putnam, D. D., 1.  
 The Three Revelations,—by Rev. M. De Lange, 217.  
 The Transfiguration,—by Rev. L. J. Livermore, 502.  
 The Value of Christian Literature,—by Rev. George E. Ellis, 319.

## POETRY.

- Angel Ministries, 61.  
 Dream of the Weary, 406.  
 Extract from a Poem delivered before a Temperance Society, 160.  
 Happy Children, 379.  
 Life, 60.  
 Lines to Two Boys Chasing a Rainbow, 348.  
 Lines written on Reading Philo, an Evangeliad, 113.  
 Longings, 40.  
 Memories of the Homestead, 295.  
 Might of Truth, 466.  
 "My Father Worketh, and I Work," 546.  
 Prayers of the World's Labor and its Rest, 21.
- Sabbath Morning Hymn, 308.  
 Speak out Thy Thought, 130.  
 The Ballade of Archbishoppe Chiche-lye, 80.  
 The Bible, 552.  
 The Mourner's Petition, 183.  
 The Two Lullabies, 374.  
 The Village Church Bell, 211.  
 To a Mother, 442.  
 To an Indian Boy found Dead on his Trysting Place, 510.  
 To an Infant, 413.  
 To a Sunday School Teacher, 68.  
 True Repose, 236.  
 Trust in Man, 29.  
 Winter Cheer, 124.

## MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

- American Unitarian Association, 48,  
96, 284.  
Anniversaries in Boston, 282, 386.  
Anniversary of the Cambridge Divi-  
ty School, 384.  
Anniversary of the Meadville Divini-  
ty School, 383.  
Autumnal Convention, 520.  
Cemetery at Brighton, 432.  
Christian Inquirer at Montreal, 246.  
Church at Newburyport, 432.  
Condition of our City Congregations,  
430.  
Conference Meeting, 144.  
Editor's Note, 48.  
Harvard College, 143.  
Items, 143, 240, 281, 576.  
Parishes and Preachers, 48, 96, 384.  
Present State of Religion, 430.  
Publications, 144.  
Rev. Dr. Barrett, 192.  
Second Church in Boston, 432.  
Society for the Relief of Aged and  
Destitute Clergymen, 143.  
Sunday Evening Lectures, 47.  
Unitarian Association of the State of  
New York, 95.  
Warren Street Chapel, 239.  
Windsor, Vt., 192.

## INSTALLATIONS AND ORDINATIONS.

- Mr. Robert P. Rogers,—Canton,  
Mass., 95.  
Rev. Frederick Hinckley,—Haverhill,  
Mass., 576.  
Mr. Joshua A. Swan,—Kennebunk,  
Me, 143.  
Mr. Daniel W. Stevens,—Mansfield,  
Mass., 281.  
Rev. W. H. Kinsley,—Mendon, Mass.,  
335.  
Mr. Charles J. Bowen,—Newburyport,  
Mass., 576.  
Mr. Francis C. Williams,—North An-  
dover, Mass., 192.  
Rev. F. H. Hedge,—Providence, R.  
I., 239.  
Mr. Stillman Barber,—Rowe, Mass.,  
385.  
Rev. George S. Ball, Upton, Mass.  
95.  
Mr. Francis Lebaron, as an Evange-  
list, 383.  
Mr. Rush R. Shippen as an Evange-  
list, 47.

## DEDICATIONS.

- Leominster, Mass., 192  
Lowell, Mass., 383  
Wayland, Mass., 576  
Westboro', Mass., 95